

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 1, 11, 18, and 21 (Currently Amended)

Claims 2, 5-9, 13, 19, 20, 22, and 24 (Previously Amended)

Claims 3, 4, 14-17, 23, 25, 26 (Original)

Claim 10, 12 (Cancelled)

Claims 1-9, 11, and 13-26 are pending in the present application. Applicant has amended claims 1, 11, 18, and 21 to more clearly define the present invention.

Telephone Interview

On July 13, 2004, Applicant's representative conducted a telephone interview with Supervisory Examiner Thomas and Examiner Pass to discuss the present application. Applicant appreciated the opportunity to discuss the present application with the Examiners. During the telephone interview, it was suggested that Applicant amend the pending claims to indicate more clearly which components perform the functions of the claimed invention. It was also suggested that Applicant indicate where in the specification support for the claimed invention may be found. No agreement regarding proposed amendments to the claims was reached.

Comments under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3, 4, 9, 11-13, 18, 19, 21, and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki in view of Shavit and further in view of King. The Examiner has further rejected claims 2, 14, 15, 22, and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §

103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki in view of Shavit and King and further in view of Atcheson. The Examiner has rejected claims 5-8, 16, 17, 20, 24- 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki in view of Shavit and King further in view of Filepp. It is the Examiner's position that the recited features of real time or interactive updates to assimilated product information based on customer requests are taught by a combination of applied references.

Applicant has amended the claims to more clearly define the present invention. Specifically, Applicant has amended the claims to indicate that updates to assimilated product information are prepared by and transmitted from a host computer to a customer computer if 1) the customer computer has requested updates to assimilated product information, and 2) one of the merchant's computers has transmitted updates to the product information stored in a database. The present invention provides continuous updates to product information displayed at a customer computer and obviates the need for customers to submit the same request multiple times to be assured of obtaining the most current product information.

Support for the claims as amended is found in the following passages:

Pg. 1, ll. 6-7: a computer system that enables a user to have real time access to product/service information and direct product/service ordering from multiple merchants

Pg. 3, ll. 10-11: the present invention is designed to provide a user with real time product/service information, from a variety of merchants

Pg. 3, ll. 17-18: value added software is provided at the network to assimilate the data collected from various and multiple merchants in real time

- Pg. 5, II. 14-16: the software of the present invention can quickly generate a new product/service presentation as the data changes from the merchants in real time
- Pg. 6, II. 18-20: preferably, the network database(s) receives updated information in real time from the various merchants as the information is updated
- Pg. 9, II. 7-9: the network host, through network software, accesses the network database(s) that is updated in real time from the merchants and retrieves the requested information
- Pg. 9, II. 12-15: optionally, the user may request real time updates of the requested information. Then, the information on the user's computer is continuously updated as the information received from the merchants by the network host is updated
- Pg. 10, II. 1-3: the user may access the information instantaneously from the various merchants by a series of two-way communication paths existing between the user's personal computer, a network host, the merchant, and an optional switch

Applicant respectfully submits that none of the references cited by the Examiner teach assimilation and transmission of updates to product information at a customer's computer based on 1) a customer computer request for updates to assimilated product information, and 2) updates to the product information stored in a database as they are received from a merchant computer.

Suzuki teaches an integrated database that includes product information. Although the integrated database at the host computer may be updated from time-to-time, a customer cannot submit a request for updates to product information and then receive them as the host computer determines there are updates to the product

information available from the integrated database. In Suzuki, the only way to receive the most current information is to submit repeatedly to the host computer the same request for product information.

In contrast to Suzuki, Shavit does not teach maintaining any host computer databases with product information for subscribers to review. To review product information from a distributor (i.e., access a catalog), a user must select a distributor with which to interact and then obtain access to the distributor's catalog. To compare products from different distributors, the user must access the catalogs of each of the different distributors. This problem of requiring customers to "shop" one merchant at a time is described in Applicant's specification, and it's a problem that Applicant's invention solves.

King also does not teach or even suggest real time updates to a display of assimilated product information from various merchants. King teaches downloading of data periodically from a public catalog to a customer's computer or a supplier issuing batch transaction commands to send modifications to the customer's host computer system. King teaches the essentially the same techniques for updating product information at a host computer that Suzuki teaches. The database is updated from time-to-time and data is retrieved from the database only when a user submits a new request for data. Users do not have the option of receiving updates to displayed information as the updates are received from merchant computers at the host computer. As in Suzuki, the only way to receive the most current information is to submit repeatedly the same request for product information.



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Applicant's invention represents a significant improvement over the prior art because information regarding a variety of products and services may be obtained, and more importantly updated, as updates to the product information are transmitted from the merchants' computer so that the user may compare the current offerings of the different merchants. Applicant respectfully submits the amended claims patentably define the present invention.

Respectfully submitted,

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